



PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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TWO MEN CHARGED IN MURDER OF UNCLES

PHOENIX, ARIZONA -- The United States Attorney's Office for the District of Arizona announced that on April 8, 2003, a federal grand jury at Phoenix, Arizona, returned a six count indictment against JAYSON NEZ (D.O.B. 11/9/80) of Indian Wells, Arizona and WILLY LEE LEWIS (D.O.B. 2/23/80).

The indictment alleges that the defendants murdered NEZ's uncles, Gene and Steven Tom, in Indian Wells on or about January 23, 2003. A complaint filed against NEZ on March 14, 2003 states that the defendants planned to rob the uncles. The complaint alleges that on January 23, 2003, the two defendants arrived at the uncles' house and bludgeoned Gene Tom to death with rocks. Thereafter, Steven Tom arrived home and was shot in the head and stabbed in the neck by the defendants. The defendants then disposed of the bodies in a shallow grave near Indian Wells, Arizona on the Navajo Indian Reservation. The bodies were found by Navajo police officers on March 8, 2003. NEZ was arrested for the murders on March 14, 2003, at the time the criminal complaint was filed. LEWIS is currently in the custody of Arizona Department of Corrections on other charges.

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The federal indictment charges both defendants with violating Title 18 of the United States Code, Sections 1111 (First Degree Murder), 924(c) (Use of a Firearm in a Crime of Violence) and 2 (Aiding and Abetting).

A conviction for First Degree Murder carries a maximum penalty of life, a \$250,000 fine or both and conviction for Use of a Firearm during a Crime of Violence carries a maximum penalty of 10 years.

An indictment is simply the method by which a person is charged with criminal activity and raises no inference of guilt. An individual is presumed innocent until competent evidence is presented to a jury that establishes guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

The investigation preceding the indictment was conducted by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Navajo Department of Public Safety, Criminal Investigations.

The prosecution is being handled by Ann Birmingham Scheel, Assistant United States Attorney, District of Arizona, Phoenix, Arizona.

CASE NUMBER: CR-03-361-PCT
RELEASE NUMBER: 2003-060

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